

**Statement of Shana Dale  
Nominee for Deputy Administrator of NASA**

**Before the  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate**

**November 1, 2005**

Mr. Chairman, Co-Chairman Inouye, and Members of the Committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Bush's nominee to be the Deputy Administrator of NASA. I would like to thank Mike Griffin for recommending me to be his Deputy and I would like to thank President Bush for nominating me for this position.

I believe that NASA is entering a period of great promise, excitement, and opportunity. One key reason for this is the President's Vision for Space Exploration – a bold and energizing mission for NASA's future.

In 2004, the President said “We have undertaken space travel because the desire to explore and understand is part of our character.” He went on to say we are “drawn to the heavens for the same reason we were once drawn into unknown lands and across the open sea. We choose to explore space because doing so improves our lives, and lifts our national spirit.”

The President's Vision for Space Exploration is a direct reflection of these fundamental goals and desires. At the same time, it has been designed specifically to be sustainable and affordable, with the resilience to survive budgetary fluctuations that may occur in the future. This is a critical point because this space exploration initiative will span decades into the future. Ultimately, the quest is to extend human exploration across the Solar System.

If confirmed as Deputy Administrator, I am committed to working with Administrator Griffin, the people of NASA, Congress, the White House, and the private sector to lay the foundation necessary to ultimately achieve the Vision for Space Exploration.

When Americans think of human space exploration today, they think first of the Space Shuttle and the International Space Station.

The Space Shuttle has provided technological advances and knowledge that will be especially useful for the Exploration Vision. Administrator Griffin has described the Space Shuttle as an amazing vehicle, designed by this Nation's most brilliant aerospace engineers.

Over the last five years, the U.S. and its international partners have built a 400,000 pound space station in low Earth orbit which enables critically important research. The International Space Station enables research on the effects of space on human health that is important for longer term space travel beyond low Earth orbit.

Another important goal is achieving a balanced overall program of science, aeronautics, exploration, and space operations. It is my belief that it is possible, and in fact, very important, to maintain healthy programs in science and aeronautics. As Mike Griffin has stated, even in the Apollo era when the race was on to get to the Moon, NASA was able to execute dozens of science missions and maintain a robust program of aeronautics development.

NASA's Science Directorate seeks to understand the origins, evolution, and destiny of the universe and to understand the nature of the unique phenomena that shape it. The Directorate seeks to understand the Sun and Earth, the nature of life in the universe, what kinds of life may exist beyond Earth, and the nature of the solar system –scientifically and in preparation for human exploration. Scientific discoveries from missions such as the Hubble Space Telescope, Voyager, Aqua, and the two Mars rovers further the fundamental missions of NASA and spark the imagination of people around the world.

In aeronautics, NASA is currently re-shaping the program to focus in three important areas. First, mastery of core competencies in subsonic, supersonic, and hypersonic flight; second, research in aviation safety that takes advantage of the agency's unique capabilities; and third, partnership with the FAA and other agencies to directly address the needs of the Next Generation Air Transportation System. NASA also is moving in the direction of reinvesting in in-house expertise, establishing a program to ensure that essential wind tunnel facilities are maintained, and building strong partnerships with the Defense Department, industry, and academia.

Mr. Chairman, I am excited for the opportunity to serve the United States' space program. I have long been a supporter of our nation's aerospace efforts and, if confirmed, look forward to becoming an advocate for NASA in the aerospace community, within the Executive Branch, before the U.S. Congress, and to the American public.

The breadth and the depth of my experience for the position of Deputy Administrator come from working in the Legislative branch, the Executive branch, and academia for the past 15 years. My experience for this position is in 3 fundamental areas:

1. agency management;
2. policymaking; and

3. a comprehensive knowledge of NASA and the aerospace community

Let me provide some specifics:

My extensive agency management experience comes from my years at the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP). I came to the agency at a time when it had a skeleton staff and had very few standard operating procedures. My task was to build the agency from the ground up. I focused on 3 key elements: recruiting skilled staff, developing operating procedures, and creating trusted working relationships.

Soon after arriving at OSTP, I developed a plan for determining the critical skill sets needed in the agency and mapping those against existing expertise. I worked to recruit highly qualified scientists and engineers and senior staff for communications, legislative affairs, budget, financial management, security and human resources.

Second, I turned my attention to developing operating procedures for the entire agency which established an environment for efficient and effective management of day-to-day operations and decision-making processes.

Third, consistent with the approach I have taken throughout my public service, I developed trusted working relationships within OSTP, with senior staff in other offices of the Executive Office of the President, and with officials in the Federal agencies, and Congress, the private sector and the international community.

My extensive political and policymaking experience comes from working for the past 15 years in Washington D.C. I have on-the-ground experience with the inner workings of the White House and Congress, and understand the complexities and challenges of how agencies interact and how to successfully accomplish program and policy objectives.

While serving as Chief of Staff and General Counsel at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, I had the additional responsibility of leading the homeland and national security staff. In the early days after 9/11, this included leading and executing homeland security technical operations – a highly unusual function for a policy office. These political and policymaking skills will be crucial to helping NASA successfully navigate the challenging times ahead.

The third element of my experience for this position is due to my role as Staff Director of the House Space and Aeronautics Subcommittee in the 1990s. During that tenure, I developed a comprehensive knowledge of NASA and the aerospace community. Legislative oversight of NASA's budget, policies, and

programs provided me an in-depth understanding of, and sensitivity for, the issues facing the agency.

If confirmed, my fundamental areas of expertise combined with the Administrator's technical expertise and leadership and the Associate Administrator's long-term agency experience will produce a powerful and complete skill set within the senior team to lead NASA into the future.

These are exciting and challenging times for NASA and I want to help the agency build even stronger relationships with Congress, the White House, and the American people. If confirmed, I look forward to working in an environment of accomplishment and achievement at NASA, a place where significant scientific and technological breakthroughs are everyday occurrences. I am honored to be nominated and I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

Mr. Chairman, I am happy to answer questions you or the rest of the Committee may have.